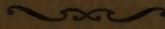


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Some Experiences in the Tomb of Tutenkhamon/



James Henry Breasted



ALUMNI PAMPHLETS

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Breasted

SOME EXPERIENCES IN THE TOMB OF TUTENKHAMON¹

In marked contrast with other lands, Egypt does far more for us than merely to preserve its ancient tomb *buildings*. The impressive tomb of Hadrian at Rome now contains neither the body nor any of the royal mortuary equipment of the great emperor whose sepulcher it was. The same is true of the tomb of Theodoric at Ravenna. The tomb of Cyrus in western Persia lies open, deserted and forsaken, and only Greek stories of Alexander's adventures tell us of the splendor with which it was once furnished and adorned. Of the magnificent tomb of Mausolus, so typical of the monumental sepulcher that it has left us the word *mausoleum*, only fragments of sumptuous marble sculptures like those in the British Museum have survived. I have stood over the palace crypts of the Assyrian kings in their earliest capital at Assur on the Tigris—or over the spot where their royal burial vaults once were—and found them almost or quite undiscernible, even in ground-plan, while the stone sarcophagi which once contained the royal bodies have been smashed to fragments. Throughout the length and breadth of the ancient world in Europe and Asia the storms of war and weather have swept over the royal tombs and usually left little behind, even of the buildings, to say nothing of their equipment.

Even in Egypt, however, the most massive and seemingly imperishable tombs have failed to protect the royal dead from desecrating hands. The earliest buildings of stone masonry ever erected by man were the pyramids; and the first architect to begin such building, nearly 3000 B.C., was the founder of stone-masonry architecture. For over fourteen centuries after he showed the way, the sovereigns of Egypt built their tombs in the form of pyramids, some of which are the greatest buildings that early man ever achieved. Over seventy such pyramidal tombs have survived, but in only one has the body of the royal builder been found. After 2000 B.C. thinking Egyptians had already discerned the futility

¹ By courtesy of the editor of *Art and Archaeology*, this article appeared at the same time in the *University Record* and in *Art and Archaeology*.

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of these colossal sepulchers; and the thought that not even the king could preserve his body after death brought a somber note into Egyptian literature, one of many indications of the first age of disillusionment and pessimism. By 1600 B.C., or a little after, following closely on the rise of the Egyptian Empire, the pharaohs abandoned the pyramid. The *nobles* had long hewn their tomb chambers into the face of the cliffs which look down upon the Nile Valley from both sides of the river. At Thebes, some five hundred and fifty miles from the Mediterranean, as the Egyptian Empire arose, the nobles and successful military men had already followed the example of their ancestors and had begun that remarkable series of private tombs hewn in the Theban cliffs, which today honeycomb the face of the mountain and look down upon the modern visitor approaching from afar across the plain. They have made the necropolis of Thebes a veritable historical volume, revealing the splendor of the wealth and power of the Egyptian Empire, about which we should know so little without them. Below these tombs of the nobles stretched the palaces and temples of the imperial pharaohs, forming the first great monumental city of the early world. There the remarkable civilization of the Nile Valley, already two thousand years old, ripened into a rich and noble culture, far superior to the chiefly mercantile civilization of Babylonia and Western Asia, and approached only by the remarkable culture of Crete, which drew much from the land of the pharaohs. Fed by the wealth of Western Asia and the Mediterranean, both of which it dominated, the imperial power of Thebes found expression in imposing architectural forms of dignity and splendor. There followed the first civilization which might be called truly refined; and in the marvels of its extraordinary arts and crafts it compared with that of Louis XIV. The Theban cemetery rapidly became a great storehouse of Empire culture, for the desire to equip the dead with all material comforts and conveniences led the Egyptian to put into the tomb an elaborate outfit of furniture and household appurtenances. In an almost rainless climate and far above the reach of the Nile inundations, this mortuary equipment has sometimes survived in an incredibly perfect state of preservation.

From his palace in the city below, the pharaoh must often have looked up at this vast cliff cemetery and wondered whether his body would be safer there than in the ancestral pyramids, many of which he had seen open and plundered. About 1550 a pharaoh for the first time took the momentous step of ordering his tomb excavated in the face of the Theban cliffs. But this exposed position of the royal tomb was not

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approved by his successor, who instructed his own architect to observe the greatest secrecy and to shift the pharaoh's cliff-tomb over into a desolate valley in the desert plateau immediately behind the Theban cliffs, where it was to be excavated "no one seeing, no one hearing." For nearly five hundred years this valley continued to be the pharaonic cemetery, throughout the Eighteenth, Nineteenth, and Twentieth Dynasties, till it contained some sixty tombs, nearly all royal. Some time after 1100 B.C. it ceased to be used.

By 1150 B.C. the Egyptian Empire had collapsed and the weak and decadent post-Empire pharaohs were quite unequal to the task of protecting the "Valley of the Kings' Tombs," as we now call the royal cemetery of the Empire. For generations after the fall of the Empire, and often undoubtedly with the connivance of government officials, the tomb robbers of Thebes continued their depredations, penetrating one royal tomb after another and plundering at will the magnificent burials. We have a considerable body of very interesting court records, written on papyrus, which contain accounts of the prosecution of various bands of these cemetery robbers in the reign of Ramses IX (1142-1123 B.C.). Decked in the splendor which the wealth of Asia had brought them, the bodies of the great emperors sleeping in the lonely valley were being rapidly despoiled, and within a generation the tombs of the whole line of these pharaohs, representing almost half a millennium, the entire period of the Empire, had been looted.

The impotent post-Empire pharaohs, the last of the line of Ramses, were pushed aside after 1100 B.C. by the priests of Amon, who made their high priest king. This feeble line of priest-kings thus supplanted the pharaohs as the popes displaced the Caesars at Rome; and, as the early popes beheld or even assisted in the dismantling of the great buildings of imperial Rome, so the priest-kings of Egypt were helpless to stay the destruction which was steadily overtaking the splendor of the Egyptian Empire at Thebes. But they respected the bodies of the great emperors and began a policy of shifting them from tomb to tomb, or bringing them together in one place for better protection. Eventually, all the royal bodies, together with some scanty wreckage of their once magnificent mortuary equipment, were brought together in a secretly prepared cache hewn in the face of the western cliffs of Thebes. This hiding place at last proved effective. It was sealed for the last time early in the Twenty-second Dynasty, not long after 940 B.C. Here the greatest kings of Egypt slept on unmolested for nearly three thousand years, until the early seventies of the nineteenth century, when the modern Theban

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descendants of those same tomb-robbers, of whose prosecution under Ramses IX three thousand years ago we can still read, discovered the place, and the plundering of the royal bodies was begun again. By methods not greatly differing from those employed under Ramses IX, the modern authorities forced the thieves to disclose the place. Thus nearly three thousand years after they had been sealed in their hiding place by the ancient scribes, and some thirty-five hundred years after the first interment of the earliest among them, the faces of the Egyptian emperors were disclosed to the modern world, and, perhaps with questionable taste, are still to be inspected in modern museum show cases in Cairo.

Since Belzoni found the tomb of Seti I in 1817 and brought its magnificent alabaster sarcophagus to England, modern investigation of the cemetery has penetrated into one after another of these royal sepulchers, finding them all plundered by the ancient post-Empire tomb-robbers whose depredations we have narrated. The body of the powerful Amenhotep II was the only one found still lying in the sarcophagus, but it had been completely despoiled and the tomb thoroughly looted. Almost nothing remained but the king's bow, which he proudly tells us in his inscriptions no other man could draw, and which he had therefore laid by his side in death, where the modern excavators found it still lying, unmolested by the ancient marauders. Quite properly left lying in his tomb by the intervention of Lord Cromer, Amenhotep II has been the only known pharaoh who still slept on in his own sepulcher. It has become proverbial among students of Egyptian history that all the royal burials in the Valley of the Kings' Tombs were completely plundered by the post-Empire tomb-robbers, and that not one had survived the violence and destruction which immediately followed the fall of the Empire.

If this sketch of archaeological history has not wearied the reader, we are now in a position to understand the extraordinary and unexpected character of the royal tomb discovered in the famous valley by Mr. Howard Carter in the course of investigations maintained by the Earl of Carnarvon. Perhaps if the reader shares with me the zest of examining the evidence and determining the status of this remarkable tomb, a privilege which I owe to the kindness of the Earl of Carnarvon and Mr. Carter, he will better understand the unparalleled value of the discovery, and likewise experience some of the pleasure which such investigations afford.

Lord Carnarvon had for some years been moving the huge masses of limestone rubbish with which the foot of the steeps and slopes of the

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famous Valley of the Kings' Tombs is encumbered. Carter's long acquaintance with every local detail of the place and his skill and experience in dealing with its peculiar difficulties, combined with Lord Carnarvon's unflagging perseverance in the face of discouraging disappointments in former years, had steadily carried forward foot by foot and yard by yard the systematic clearance and minute examination of the foot of the cliffs and the floor of the valley. Would they find the missing tomb of Tutenkhamon? The tombs of all the great emperors had long ago been found. But at the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty there was a gap. It was caused by the fact that the revolutionary pharaoh Ikhnaton (Amenhotep IV), after annihilating the old gods, especially Amon, and introducing the exclusive worship of a sole God, the sun-god Aton, had forsaken Amon's imperial city of Thebes and built for himself a new capital at Tell el-Amarna. There he established the earliest monotheism, and there he had made his tomb. Dying without a son, he was succeeded by first one and then another son-in-law. The second of these sons-in-law, Tutenkhaton ("Living Image of Aton," as his name signified), was unable to maintain the religious revolution against priestly opposition. The priests of Amon at the old capital forced him to return there and resume the worship of the old gods, especially Amon. They obliged him even to change his name by inserting Amon in the place of Aton. He became Tutenkhamon, "Living Image of Amon"; and his wife, the princess Enkhosnepaaton ("She Lives by Aton"), was likewise constrained to renounce the name her great father had given her and become Enkhosnamon ("She Lives by Amon"). The discovery in the Valley of the Kings' Tombs of royal burial linen bearing the name of Tutenkhamon, coupled with other indications, made it probable that this king was himself buried in the great royal cemetery of the valley. The astonishing revolution which he had survived had carried the art of Egypt to a level of power and beauty surpassing anything before known, whether in Egypt or anywhere else in the early Orient. If the missing tomb of Tutenkhamon could be found, perhaps some of this artistic splendor might have escaped the post-Empire robbers. Who could tell?

We were drinking tea on the deck of the dahabiyah "Cheops" as we drifted past the now somber and palmless Island of Philae to a mooring place at Shellâl, at the head of the First Cataract. It was the sixth of December, and, aided by a tug, we had run from the cataract to the wonderful temple of Abu Simbel and back in five days. Abu Simbel is three hundred miles above Luxor, and we were congratulating ourselves

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that we had done all this within a week and a day after leaving Luxor. The next morning brought a bag of letters from the Aswan post-office. Among them was a kind note from Lord Carnarvon in which he said: "Two days after opening the cache or tomb I learned you had been through Luxor. I wish I had known, for I might then have persuaded you to stop a day and see a marvelous sight. Still there is another sealed door to be opened and I hope I shall then have the pleasure of seeing you there." He did not say what it was. He knew we would understand that the lost tomb of Tutenkhamon had been found.

A few days later the "Cheops" tied up at Luxor. Lord Carnarvon had returned to England to complete arrangements for the proper care of the great discovery. I found Carter just returned from Cairo, bringing with him a heavy iron door for closing the tomb. From his Cairo train he came over to see us and sat for an hour resting and telling of the great find. He was weary of telegrams and sick to death of reporters, and he had on his shoulders a very heavy responsibility. In order to make all safe he had filled in the outer entrance of the tomb with a great many tons of limestone chips, which it would take several days to remove. Then he must instal the iron door and run down a wire from the neighboring small electric-light plant used to light the other royal tombs for the tourists, for it would of course be very unsafe to work with candles in such a place. When all was in readiness he would send me word to come and have a first view. Meantime nothing would be done and the chamber would be left exactly as when first opened.

Before the war Luxor had become a fashionable winter resort. It has not yet recovered its former popularity, but there was no lack of winter guests. When Carter's native runner finally brought his note on board, it contained a warning against being followed. In order to mislead the prying and the curious, and especially to avoid being followed by gentlemen of the press, we unconcernedly crossed the river in our felucca and ostentatiously engaged our donkeys to take us only to the foot of the western cliffs and not around through the entrance to the Valley of the Kings' Tombs, where Carter had his house. Having crossed the broad Theban plain, a ride of three quarters of an hour, we left our donkeys, and, climbing the steep cliffs in the blazing Egyptian sunshine, dropped down into the royal cemetery valley on the other side without having been followed by anyone. As we came down we could see just above the tomb of Ramses VI the huts of the government watchmen who guard the place at the present day. Immediately below this

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tomb Carter's clearance had exposed a flight of steps hewn into the limestone of the mountain. This had led to the discovery of the new tomb.

At the foot of these steps we saw a stout wooden grating fastened by many padlocks, which Carter's people at once began unlocking. When this was removed, it revealed a spacious gallery some twenty-five feet long, likewise hewn in limestone, descending at a sharp incline and terminating below in Carter's heavy iron door. These two doors, the first of wood, the second of iron, replaced two ancient closures of masonry which Carter had found filling the two doorways. The plastered face of the closing masonry, when found by Carter, still bore many royal seal impressions which he broke away in forcing an opening. As we descended the gallery we found the iron door covered with a white sheet to moderate the drafts. Suddenly electric bulbs of three thousand candle power hanging behind the sheet were turned on, and there was a blaze of light seen through the white fabric. The door was a heavy open grill; and as Carter pulled down the sheet, I saw through the open-work of the door a sight I had never dreamed of seeing. Under this blaze of light I beheld the antechamber of a pharaoh's tomb still filled with the magnificent equipment which only the wealth and splendor of the Imperial Age in Egypt in the fourteenth century before Christ could have wrought or conceived; and, as it at first seemed, with everything still standing as it was placed there when the tomb was closed three thousand two hundred and fifty years ago. The gorgeousness of the sight, the sumptuous splendor of it all, made it appear more like the confused magnificence of those counterfeit splendors which are heaped together in the property-room of some modern grand opera than any possible reality surviving from antiquity. Never was anything so dramatic in the whole range of archaeological discovery as this first view vouchsafed us here when the white curtain was pulled down. Carter was busy at the padlocks (American Yale locks!) and steel chains, and then the door swung open. Stepping in at last, I was utterly dazed by the overwhelming spectacle. The chamber was, I should guess, about fourteen by somewhat more than twenty feet in size. Against the rear wall, and occupying almost its entire length of over twenty feet, were placed head to foot three magnificent couches all overwrought with gold. As we faced them they were breast high and evidently required a flight of portable steps when majesty mounted to bed. The one at the right was made in the form of a standing panther, the creature's head rising as the bedpost at the head of the couch where his forelegs furnished also the supporting legs of the couch, his hind legs serving the same function at the foot. In the

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same way the middle couch had the form of a mottled cow with tall horns, and the third at the left was a grotesque Typhon-like hippo with mouth open showing the grinning teeth. Under the couches were chairs and caskets, chests and boxes. The chairs were sumptuous and magnificent beyond description. One of them, indeed, and by far the finest, which was mentioned in the dispatches as a throne (though this is not correct), displays in the inside of the back representations of the king and queen standing together, the work done in gold and silver with incrustation and inlay of semiprecious stones in bright colors. In art and craftsmanship it is one of the finest pieces of work now in existence from any age of the world, and far surpasses the best work of the craftsman now surviving from any other early time or people.

Literally stunned with surprise and admiration, I could only utter one ejaculation of amazement after another, and then turn and shake Carter's hand. Emotion struggled with the habit of years to observe and to understand. The critical faculties were getting much the worst of it in the struggle. There was reason enough, for all about us lay a completely new revelation of ancient life, quite transcending anything of which we had ever known before. In a corner at the right I knelt before a lovely casket containing part of the royal raiment. The outside of the casket was all painted with scenes in miniature, representing the pharaoh and the royal suite engaged in hunting and in war. Description can but feebly suggest the exquisite character of this painted decoration and the power of the unknown master who did it. The dying lion clutches with his mighty paw at the arrow which has entered his open mouth and hangs broken at his gnashing teeth. His wounded comrades of the jungle lie all about him in postures of pathetic suffering; and all this is done with such marvelous refinement of detail, especially in depicting the hairy manes, that one is reminded of similar work by Albrecht Dürer. Indeed the whole suggests the art of the Japanese painters of a century or two ago.

In the left corner of the front wall lay the dismantled wheels and other parts of a number of royal chariots. They were adorned with sumptuous designs in gold and incrustation of semiprecious stones like the back of the royal chair, and were fully equal to it in art and craftsmanship. The wheels bore evident traces of having been driven over rough Theban streets three thousand two hundred and fifty years ago. They were therefore not show pieces especially prepared for the king's tomb, but were vehicles intended for actual use. And nevertheless adorned like this! Not vulgar and ostentatious magnificence but the



LUNCHEON IN THE TOMB OF RAMSES XI, PREPARATORY TO OPENING
THE SEALED DOORWAY INTO THE BURIAL CHAMBER
OF TUTENKHAMON

Professor Breasted at the left, facing Dr. Alan H. Gardiner; Mr. Howard Carter at Dr. Gardiner's right; the vacant chair was later occupied by Lord Carnarvon, who had not yet come in.



REMOVING ONE OF THE COUCHES FROM THE TOMB

The stairway leading to the Tomb is at the extreme left. Mr. Carter is at the right.

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tempered richness of refined art formed the daily environment of these great emperors of the East in the fourteenth century before Christ along the Nile. The splendor of Nineveh and Babylon now begins to seem but a rough foil, setting off the refined culture of a higher civilization at Egyptian Thebes which could boast such craftsmen as this royal furniture was revealing for the first time—men quite worthy to stand beside Lorenzo Ghiberti and Benvenuto Cellini. As I stood in that rock-hewn chamber, I felt the culture values of the ancient world shifting so rapidly that it made one fairly dizzy.

I wandered up and down before the couches, aimlessly fingering notebook and pencil. Of what use were notes made in such a state of mind, with a whirling myriad of thoughts and details crowding for record all at once? There between two of the couches were four alabaster vases carved with open-work flowers growing on each side and forming the handles. No one had ever seen such vases before. Yonder was a casket of jewelry, and under one of the couches lay a magnificent courtier's baton with a superb handle of gleaming gold, the designs being done in filigree and lovely chevrons made up of tiny spheres of gold, laid scores of them to the inch on the background of sheet gold. Just behind it was a door in the back wall of the chamber, opposite the chariots and accessible only by crawling under the left-hand couch. Carter handed me a portable electric bulb and I crawled under the tall couch to peep through the door. It had been masoned up, but this masonry had been broken through at the bottom. Through this breach, as I thrust in the bulb, I could see a second room, the "annex chamber," so filled with royal furniture that it was impossible to enter the place without injury to its contents.

At the opposite end of the antechamber (the right end as one entered) there were further indications of additional chambers of the tomb. There, facing each other on either side of a sealed and still unopened doorway in the end wall of the chamber, stood two life-sized statues of the king like silent sentries guarding the sealed inner chamber at whose door they stood. The statues were of oiled wood, blackened with age, which, in spite of their sumptuous gilding, had invested the royal figures with something of the "somber livery of the burnished sun" under which the king had lived. The figures stood on two reed mats, which were still in position under them.

A second glance had quickly dispelled the first impression that the royal tomb equipment was undisturbed. Evidences of disturbance and robbery were unmistakable. Sumptuous open-work designs in heavy

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sheet gold which filled the spaces between the legs of the finer chairs had been wrenched out and carried away. The chariots had suffered in the same way, and when the robbers finished with them they threw the parts down in confusion. They left the inner or annex chamber in great disorder. Of two shrines under the right-hand couch one had been broken open, and when the golden serpent goddess within was found not to be of massive gold, it was left with the door open, while its companion shrine, of identical design and of the same size, was left with the clay seal still unbroken protecting its tiny double doors. As the robbers left they found in their way a common couch for ordinary household use. They tossed it hastily aside as they escaped from the tomb, where they were perhaps interrupted at their work, and it still lies high on the top of the Hathor couch, with one of the cow's horns sticking through the plaited thongs tightly stretched across the couch frame. Of course, the marauders must have taken with them many golden vessels and other objects made entirely of gold.

Besides being a Sherlock Holmes task of unusual interest, it was at that juncture a matter of importance to determine who these early tomb robbers were, or at least to gain some rough approximation of the date when they forced their entrance. Carter had found the two outside doorways, at the two ends of the descending gallery, still displaying clear evidences of having been broken through and then sealed up again. The forced holes had not been large. They were made in the rubble masonry with which the doorways were closed. The roughly plastered face of this closing masonry, still bearing the precious seal impressions, had of course been carefully preserved by Carter. It did not seem to me possible that the post-Empire storm of destruction which, as we have seen, swept over this royal cemetery, could have included this tomb among its victims and still have left the content of the place so largely intact. Having ventured to doubt the current report that this tomb, like all the other royal tombs in the valley, had been looted by post-Empire robbers, I raised the question in conversation with Carter. His reply was an urgent request to come over the next day and study the door sealings carefully, for he said that his many duties and responsibilities had not given him any opportunity to examine them with any care.

The rough masses and lumps of plaster bearing the seals were stored in a neighboring tomb which Carter was using as a workshop and laboratory. The next day found us busily poring over these fragments. Unfortunately, the ancient officials who had made the seal impressions had neglected to use enough dust on the seal. The plaster had conse-

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quently stuck to the seal and when it was pulled away the plaster under it came away with it, leaving the impression almost or totally illegible. However, the same seal was used many times and by putting together all the impressions of each one it was possible to read four different seals on the two doors. Three of them contained the name of Tutenkhamon, and the fourth was that of the cemetery administration and not necessarily post-Empire. The resealing after the robbery was not marked by the name of any post-Empire king. These facts were in themselves evidence that we were dealing with the *tomb* of Tutenkhamon, and not with a cache merely containing his mortuary furniture. They likewise made it highly probable that there had been no post-Empire robbery.

In a cemetery where the post-Empire catastrophe had been so complete, was it conceivable that any royal tomb should escape destruction? What could have saved this royal burial from the greedy hands of the post-Empire robbers? In considering this question it is important to recall that the tomb of Ramses VI is almost directly over that of Tutenkhamon. The many tourists who have for years visited the beautiful tomb of the former king have little dreamed that below their feet lay the magnificent burial of Tutenkhamon. When Ramses VI's workmen were excavating his tomb, the Egyptian Empire had just fallen (about 1150 B.C.). The robberies which were to wreck the burials of the great pharaohs were just beginning. Immediately below these workmen the tomb of Tutenkhamon was over two hundred years old. As they proceeded with the excavation of Ramses VI's tomb, they carried out their baskets of limestone chips and other rubbish and threw them down the slope right over the mouth of Tutenkhamon's tomb. It is not likely that they knew it was there, for they built directly across the entrance of Tutenkhamon's tomb a line of stone huts, in which they slept at night. Covered still deeper by the workmen's huts, the tomb of Tutenkhamon was never discovered by the post-Empire tomb robbers, and it thus became the only royal tomb which escaped their depredations. This is clear enough to me now as I write, but it was not by any means demonstrated at the end of our first day's examination of the door seals from the two upper doors. There was still the inner, unopened doorway guarded by the king's statues! So Carter urged me to come over for a third visit the next day, especially to examine this unopened doorway, which likewise bore royal seals.

As I rode across the Theban plain the next morning my mind was absorbed with the problem on which we were engaged. If Tutenkhamon's tomb had really escaped the post-Empire robbers, as seemed

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highly probable, who could have robbed it under the power and wealth and efficiency of the great pharaohs of the Empire—rulers quite capable of protecting the tombs of their ancestors? There was only one bit of evidence which might throw light on this question. If you enter the tomb of Thutmose IV at the present day, you will find on the wall written in ink by an excellent scribal penman a neat memorandum to the effect that the royal burial in this tomb was restored by order of King Harmhab. Now Harmhab was the almost immediate successor of Tutenkhamon. That means that a royal burial had suffered robbery soon after the death of Tutenkhamon. His tomb may likewise have been entered by the same robbers. The thought of this bit of evidence made my ride across the beautiful Theban plain that morning quite different from any ride I had ever taken there before. Behind the majestic, sun-bathed cliffs of the western plateau rising before me slept still undisturbed in imperial magnificence one of the great sovereigns of the ancient East, just as he had been laid away three thousand two hundred and fifty years ago. Behind the still unopened sealed doorway must be the chamber where he lay, and there we should gain an even more splendid vision of ancient life from the marvelous works of art with which the lords of the Egyptian Empire had furnished the burial of their imperial sovereign in the fourteenth century before Christ. Would post-Empire seals on the inner doorway dispel this pipe-dream?

I found Carter with a sheaf of telegrams and letters from all sorts of people who were trying to gain a glimpse of the wonderful tomb. When he had disposed of these, we rode up through the mouth of the wild and impressive valley, just outside of which Carter has for many years had his house. Under the burning Egyptian sun the valley was glowing with tremulous light which touched the rocks with splendor—a fitting place for the sepulchers of Egypt's greatest dead, the "sons of the sun," as the pharaohs called themselves. Over our heads rose a mountain of sunlit limestone above the chamber to which we descended. The silence of forgotten ages seemed to brood over the place as the echoes of our footfalls faded and we stood quietly in the great king's tomb.

Before us was the still unopened door. The floor before it was encumbered with small objects, which it was unwise to move before the preliminary records of the conditions in the tomb were made. To our regret also, we were obliged to stand on the ancient reed matting on which the king's statues had so long ago been placed. Otherwise we could not bring our eyes near enough to the seal-impressed mortar. Then began the detailed examination of one broken, imperfect and mostly illegible

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seal impression after another. As the work absorbed us, there seemed to be voices haunting the silence. Certainly there were quite audible noises. From strange rustling sounds they increased now and then to a sharp snapping report. These were the evidences of melancholy changes which were already taking place around us. For some three thousand two hundred and fifty years before Carter first entered it, the air in this chamber had been unchanged. In all likelihood the temperature too had changed but slightly if at all in all that time. Now the incoming draughts were changing the temperature and altering the air. Chemical changes were going on, and the wood in the furniture was adjusting itself to new strains, with resulting snapping and fracturing which we could plainly hear. It meant that the life of these beautiful things around us was limited. A few generations more and the objects not of pottery, stone, or metal will be gone.

At either shoulder as I worked looked down upon me the benign face of a ruler who had dominated the ancient world in the days when the Hebrews were captives in Egypt and long before Moses their leader and liberator was born. It was a noble portrait gazing down upon me in quiet serenity, as I puzzled over the seals impressed there when the king had not been long dead. Only the soft rays of the electric light suggested the modern world into which these amazing survivals from a past so remote had been so unexpectedly projected. Thus in the silence of the tomb, always conscious of the royal face contemplating me at either elbow, I continued the examination of the seals, till I had inspected every impression from the top of the doorway to a point near the bottom, where the small objects and the reed matting interfered with the examination. It was evident that this mysterious unopened inner doorway contained the same seals which I had found on the other two. A new one also, of which there were fifteen impressions, contained the name of Tutenkhamon himself. There was no Ramses, no post-Empire seal or resealing, and consequently there had been no post-Empire robbery!

What I had dreamed of, in crossing the Theban plain that morning, was an undoubted reality. As I stood in the silent chamber between the two statues of the pharaoh still imperturbably guarding the sealed doorway before me, it was evident that behind it lay the only body of a pharaoh of the Empire which had escaped the destruction wrought by post-Empire disorder and lawlessness. There he was unquestionably awaiting us, lying in undisturbed magnificence. For the hole at the bottom of this doorway was evidently much too small to have permitted the removal of anything but quite small objects. The seals at the

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bottom of the doorway needed further examination in order to determine who did the resealing after the robbery, and a detailed study was not possible until the chamber *before* the doorway had been cleared and the doorway completely freed.

Carter therefore invited me to return from Cairo, whither our Coffin Text campaign was calling us, as soon as he should have cleared the antechamber and made ready to open the burial chamber. On the fourteenth of February the work on the Coffin Texts was interrupted by a telegram from Lord Carnarvon, and the next morning I found myself again seated before the mysterious sealed doorway. The antechamber had been cleared, and there was nothing to prevent a careful examination of all of the one hundred and fifty seal impressions. Again the evidence was unequivocal—the robbery had been but slight and cursory. It had happened very soon after the burial, for every seal belonged to Tutenkhamon's reign. The tomb had escaped the post-Empire devastation. The next day, February sixteenth, the sealed doorway was forced and we entered the burial chamber. When we opened the doors of the gold and blue glaze catafalque, which had not been swung back for three thousand two hundred and fifty years and saw the unbroken royal seal on the inner catafalque, the evidence of the seals on the mysterious doorway was amply corroborated. But the story of all that is only now being completed; for the sarcophagus, which modern eyes have not yet seen, is to be opened this very January. The marvelous tale of the opening of Tutenkhamon's tomb, including also the wonders in the innermost chamber beyond the sepulcher—a tale without parallel in the whole range of archaeological research—may then be unfolded in all its revealing interest. We shall then be able to show it as it is—a treasure house of sumptuous works of art from the earliest age of spiritual emancipation in the career of man.

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